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Title: Yew War-The Beginning

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Darkness covered the Stormreaver Fort like a blanket. Grishnak stood looking over the walls below him and pondered. The watch fires burned low and the quiet murmuring of an army asleep drifted up to his ears. Nodding to himself, he turned and reentered the sanctum of his tower, grimacing as his back twinged in pain.

Settling himself in his great chair, he looked at the cow skin stretched across one wall, the skin converted into a map of the lands surrounding the fort. Shifting his weight in his chair, trying to ease the pain of age, Grishnak stared through the map into the past. A long way since living as a street urchin in Britannia, he now ruled an empire. It had taken fourteen years to reach this point.

Fourteen years of struggle. Fourteen years of toil and war and preparations for this one final act. Grishnak had rallied the lost Orcs to his banner, claimed the ancestral fort, and proceeded to give

rebirth to the once proud Orcish nation. Now the time was at hand to complete his great quest. Now was the time to drive the Humans and Elves from the lands of the Orcs for all time. Sitting in his reverie, Grishnak contemplated the events of the past. The war with Moonglow over their betrayal. The kidnapping of the dirt thief Cyan. Carrying off the Woman in Red to the depths of Despise and holding her there.

At that thought, Grishnak shuddered, remembering how she left him, singed and bleeding. Other wounds he felt, more and more with each passing year: the scar on his face from a Yewbies sword, the chipped fang from when Dunedain challenged him. What hurt him most of all were the memories of Orcs past.

So many lost. So very many.

Korgath, the mighty Orc Lord, lost on his mission to the mines. Snarfu, slain by the restless souls of his vanquished enemies. Margabud, the first Orc to answer his cry for unity. Krog the Elder, slain defending the Shame pass. Durin, the Renegade, who left the Clan to seek his own empire. Dead all these years.

Footsteps on the stairs
behind him pulled
him back to the
present. Turning he
saw Snarg, son of
Snarfu, and the Tribe
leaders Qog and
Fugluk enter the
room. The time was at
hand.

Tomorrow would begin
the final assault on
Yew. In this, there
would be no quarter.
Either Yew would fall
to the Orcs, or the Clan
would shatter itself
trying. Grishnak felt
his age and knew if
the Orcs were to
retake what was
theirs, it would have
to be now, for this
would be Grishnak's
final battle.